

OPINION

Presuming our consent

Organ donation bill has good intentions, but takes away personal choice

Organ donation. It's not exactly a dinner time conversation topic but it's a subject that could heat up this fall when the Ontario legislature resumes sitting.

NDP MPPs Peter Kormos and Cheri DiNovo will introduce a private member's bill — for a third time — in hopes of having Ontario's legislators change the current system for organ donation.

The MPPs are pushing a concept called "presumed consent" in which every eligible person in Ontario would be an automatic organ donor upon death unless they specifically opted out ahead of time.

The system has been used in various forms in Europe, but a report commissioned by the provincial government last year found little public support for presumed consent.

Under the current system people who want to donate their organs can fill out a donor card to notify family members of their wishes.

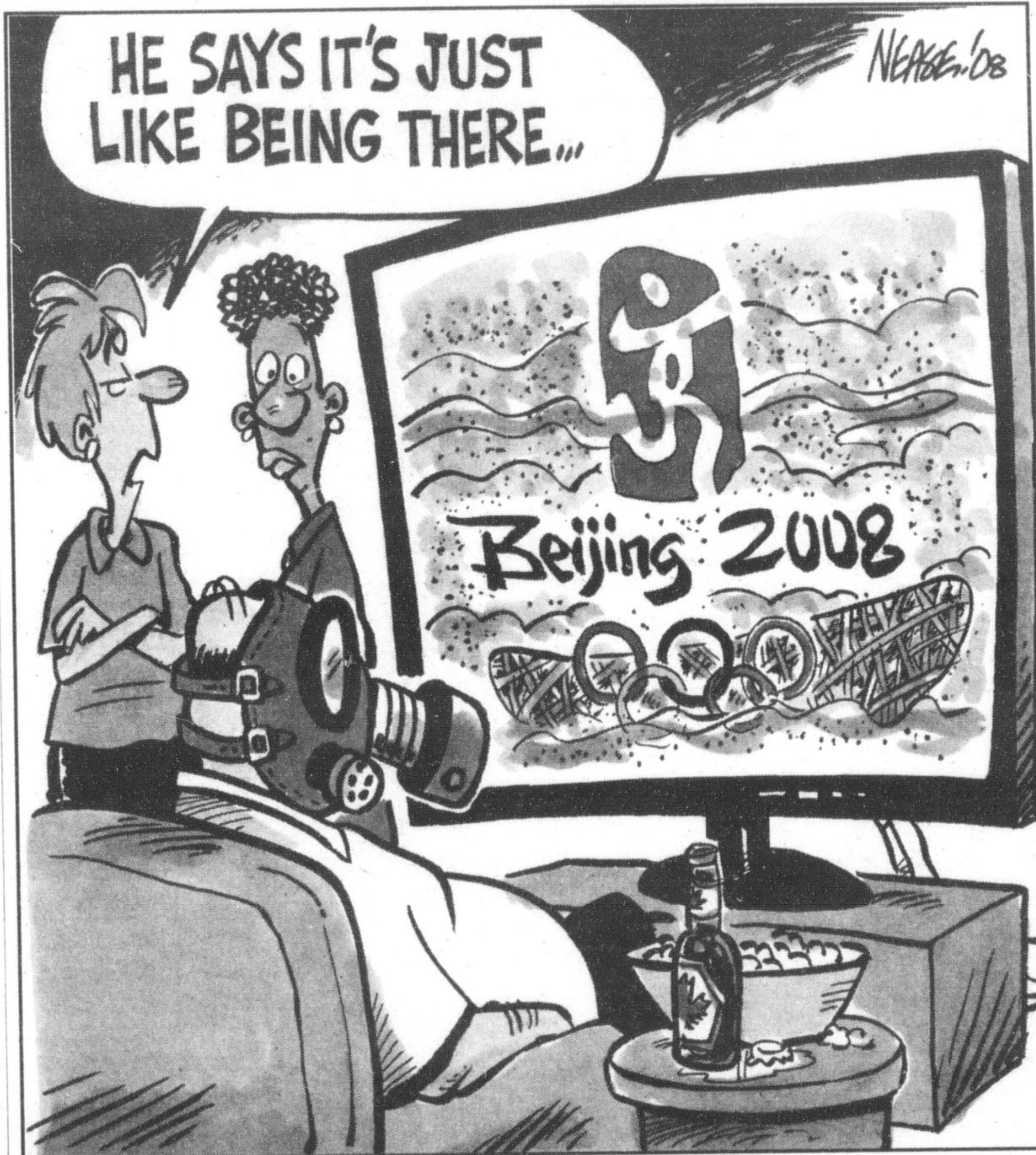
Family members are asked to provide the final consent.

Kormos argues the current system leads to unnecessary deaths. "As we speak, good organs are being burned or buried across the province because the Province insists on maintaining its presumption system," he said.

He's not wrong. About 4,000 Canadians are waiting for organ transplants, and between 140 and 250 die each year before they get it.

Organ donation is a very personal choice, but presumed consent — despite its opt-out clause — takes the choice away from the individual. While many Ontarians have no problem with organ donation, the fact remains not enough of us take the time to fill out the donor card and make family members aware of the wish to donate. We wonder how many would bother to sign a form that allows them to opt out.

This bill has good intentions and shouldn't be brushed aside this fall as a matter of politics. It deserves serious discussion, debate and much input from the Ontario public.



ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Thanks for shelter from the storm

DEAR EDITOR:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the three caring elderly people who allowed my friend and I to stay under their porch on Woodward Avenue to hide out from the pouring rain Tuesday.

We were waiting for the bus, but unfortunately it seemed to be off schedule.

If it weren't for these people's kindness, I don't know how my friend and I could have survived the thunderstorm.

It's with disappointment that I didn't get their names or address because of all the chaos going on at the time. However, I would like to offer them my heartfelt thanks.

ALICE LI
TUPPER DRIVE

Theviewfromhere

Push for more affordable housing in Milton long overdue

As you may have recently read in the *Champion*, the Town is starting the planning process for the third phase of residential development in south Milton.

This next phase could bring about 40,000 new residents to the 2,500-plus acre area known as the Boyne Survey, which is the land largely framed by Britannia and Tremaine roads and the future Louis St. Laurent Boulevard and James Snow Parkway extensions.

When this issue came up at council late last month, I was happy to hear that the Town wants to do things a little differently this time around when it comes to housing.

The municipality is looking to be more restrictive in its rules for high-density development, meaning if an area is designated for things like condominiums, developers wouldn't be able to lower the density to build

single family homes instead.

I think this is an important measure that's long overdue. One needn't look any further than the sea of single and semi-detached homes in southeast Milton to realize that local affordable housing is a scarce commodity.

Developers may say this is because the housing market demand is for single or semi-detached homes, and I'm sure that's true, but I know there are people out there looking for affordable apartments or condos who can't find one in Milton, so they leave town.

I've heard stories about young people who want to buy their first home in town because they were born and raised here, and their families are still here, but sadly they're forced to move away to a more affordable place.



Melanie Hennessey

Milton's housing selection also offers precious little to anyone, no matter how young or old, who's on a fixed income.

I could go on, but the point is that it's high time the Town put its foot down and ensured high-density development gets built.

With the population boom expected to continue for years to come in Milton, having a good mix of housing types, including affordable ones, will become all the more important to properly accommodate everyone in the

community.

This third phase of residential development is giving the Town a chance to right the wrongs of the first two housing phases.

As the old saying goes, third time's a charm.

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